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REVIVING KETOPRAK: THE ROLE OF THE YOGYAKARTA YOUTH SINEPRAK COMMUNITY IN CULTURAL PRESERVATION

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Abstract. *This research uses a case study approach to explore the role of the Sineprak community in preserving and developing the ketoprak performing arts in the modern era. The main focus of this research is on the intensive training process of actors and directors, which not only includes technical aspects but also deepening the script and interpreting the role. The COVID-19 pandemic forced Sineprak to switch to digital platforms, especially YouTube, which has successfully attracted thousands of followers. However, after Bondan Nusantara's death, the frequency of performances decreased significantly. The community-based education process at Sineprak contains Javanese cultural values such as courtesy, etiquette and cooperation, which help shape the character of the younger generation. Innovations in the presentation of modern ketoprak, including combining elements of other performing arts and modern technology, have succeeded in attracting the interest of today's audiences. Documentation and publication via social media play an important role in expanding audience reach.*

Keywords : *Performing Arts, Ketoprak Community, Digital Adaptation, Sineprak*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus untuk mengeksplorasi peran komunitas Sineprak dalam melestarikan dan mengembangkan seni pertunjukan ketoprak di era modern. Fokus utama penelitian ini adalah pada proses pelatihan intensif aktor dan sutradara, yang mencakup aspek teknis serta pendalaman naskah dan interpretasi peran. Pandemi COVID-19 memaksa Sineprak beralih ke platform digital, khususnya YouTube, yang berhasil menarik ribuan pengikut. Namun, setelah Bondan Nusantara meninggal, frekuensi pertunjukan menurun secara signifikan. Proses pendidikan berbasis komunitas di Sineprak mengandung nilai-nilai budaya Jawa seperti sopan santun, etika, dan kerjasama, yang membantu membentuk karakter generasi muda. Inovasi dalam penyajian ketoprak modern, termasuk menggabungkan elemen seni pertunjukan lain dan teknologi modern, berhasil menarik minat penonton masa kini. Dokumentasi dan publikasi melalui media sosial memainkan peran penting dalam memperluas jangkauan audiens.

Kata Kunci: *Pertunjukan Seni, Ketoprak Community, adaptasi digital, Sineprak*

INTRODUCTION

Traditional arts develop and interact closely with society, creating an inseparable unity throughout history. Art not only functions as entertainment or spectacle but also as a means of education and demands about life (Saptomo, 1996). Traditional arts are very dependent on the supporting community; when society wants to change, art follows. Edward Shils stated that traditions passed down from generation to generation always experience changes, even though they are small (Shils, 1981). In a simple or modern society, each community has a form of art that becomes its local cultural identity (Fitriasari, 2012).

According to Ember CR and M. Ember (1986), society always has beliefs, values and culture as a guide to life. This

culture is the result of learning, not biological inheritance, according to Haviland (1985). The process of cultural inheritance, including art, is more influenced by the social environment and learning than genetic factors. Culture involves the passing on of values, beliefs, science, and technology through education. Culture is learned, transferred between generations, and shared (Parson in Rohidi TR, 1994). Education is the main means of preserving culture and transferring cultural values from generation to generation.

Ketoprak is a traditional Javanese art that combines drama, dance, Javanese songs and gamelan accompaniment. As a folk art, ketoprak can develop in harmony with the times thanks to its flexible and adaptive nature (Dipoyono, 2018). Ketoprak contains Javanese cultural values such as ethics, morals and philosophy which are reflected in the language, position and social status of the characters (Yudiaryani, Wahid, & AP, 2019). These values become the nation's identity which must be preserved amidst the influx of foreign culture. Arts such as ketoprak are inherited traditionally, and guarded as symbolic heritage that is valued by the community (Rohidi TR, 2022).

In the socio-cultural aspect, the values of life in ketoprak form social institutions that bind society. Community-based education (CBAE) is an alternative to formal educational institutions, helping the younger generation to be more sensitive to the culture and environment around them (Ali, 2023). The arts community has an important role in developing the potential and preserving the arts. As a social institution, the art community helps future generations understand and preserve art (Koentjaraningrat, 1996). Arts communities such as Sineprak Anak Muda Yogyakarta, support the preservation of ketoprak with self-development and cultural preservation programs.

This research explores community-based education in the Sineprak community, examining how the art of ketoprak is taught and preserved. This study is important for understanding the community's contribution to education and cultural preservation. Previous research by Rosanti (2022) and Ratih Baiduri and Yanita Sitopu (2023) highlighted learning methods

and community empowerment. The results show that community activities can improve the quality of life and preserve culture through various programs.

Musyaf (2023) examines adaptation and innovation in community-based education, showing the importance of adapting to policies and environmental conditions. This research adds insight into how communities like Sineprak can utilize traditional arts for education and cultural preservation. It is hoped that the results of this research will provide insight and practical recommendations for other arts communities, to maintain and develop traditional arts that provide benefits to society.

Problem identification is an important first step in research because it helps focus and narrow the scope of the research and establishes the basis for appropriate methodology. The focus of problem identification in this research is the lack of interest of the younger generation in traditional arts and the rise of foreign cultures which are more popular. This raises concerns about the erosion of the nation's original culture without strong moral education. The Sineprak Community takes a role in preserving the art of ketoprak by providing a platform for the younger generation to learn and collaborate with various parties. This research will focus on the involvement of the Sineprak community in preserving ketoprak in Yogyakarta, their role in transferring educational values through creative processes and finding positive meanings from life values in personal and social contexts. The research will also explore Sineprak's contribution to supporting ketoprak regeneration and maintaining local wisdom and cultural identity.

The main issues that will be studied include why preserving Ketoprak art is important for the Sineprak Yogyakarta community, how efforts to preserve Ketoprak art are integrated into programs, principles and values as a reflection of community-based education, and how ketoprak is presented as a form of art preservation through community-based education by Sineprak Yogyakarta community. This research aims to analyze the importance of preserving ketoprak art for the Sineprak

Yogyakarta community, analyze efforts to preserve ketoprak which are integrated into programs, principles and values as a reflection of community-based education, and analyze the presentation of ketoprak as a form of art preservation through community-based education by Sineprak Yogyakarta community.

The benefits of this research are expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, this research aims to provide relevance to community-based education in preserving the Yogyakarta ketoprak. Practically, the benefits include developing knowledge in the field of ketoprak, helping future researchers with new insights, and increasing the accessibility of arts and culture education for the wider community. This research can help the next generation of ketoprak develop programs that are more inclusive and culturally relevant.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative case study design as stated by Creswell (2015), who explains that a case study is a research approach that explores real life or various cases in a contemporary limited system through detailed and in-depth data collection involving various sources of information. This method is used to understand phenomena in depth by focusing on meaning, interpretation and the social context that surrounds them. Qualitative research aims to describe phenomena in detail and in-depth through participant observation, in-depth interviews, or document analysis. This is important for understanding individual perspectives and experiences, exploring complex phenomena, or answering unanswered research questions in depth. This research focuses on Community-Based Education carried out by the Sineprak Anak Muda Yogyakarta community, especially in the creative process of ketoprak. The focus is to integrate community principles and programs for the preservation of ketoprak and the educational values contained in the process. This research will also look at the form of ketoprak presentation as a form of art preservation

through community-based education, including musical elements, instruments, media, performers, performance equipment, time and place, order of presentation, and audience.

The data in this research includes primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained directly through observations and interviews with artists in the Sineprak community (directors, actors, music directors, dance directors, make-up and costume artists, action scene artists, documentation artists and the TPK management team), practitioners, academics and audiences. Secondary data was obtained from Sineprak community documentation such as activity records, archives, books, news reports, documents and social media. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews and documentation. Observations were carried out at the Center for the Preservation of Cultural Values of the Special Region of Yogyakarta (BPNB DI Yogyakarta) on Jalan Brigjen Katamso 139 Yogyakarta. This observation involved direct observation of the creative process of the Sineprak community in preserving ketoprak and how they integrated community principles and programs with educational values. Interviews involve interaction between the researcher and the respondent to obtain the necessary information. Interviews were conducted face-to-face with artists in the Sineprak community, production assistants (multimedia, videographers, photographers, make-up and costume artists, and set designers), practitioners (culturalists), and academics. Documentation involves the collection of written data compiled by individuals or institutions to examine an event, such as written sources, films, and data. This technique is used to complete data sources that can support the success of research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sineprak Community and Ketoprak Art Preservation

The Sineprak Community is a forum for young artists in Yogyakarta to develop talents in the art of ketoprak, a form of traditional Javanese theatre, as well as preserve Yogyakarta's

cultural heritage. This community focuses on regenerating young ketoprak players, opening opportunities for anyone to join, even without a previous ketoprak background. Sineprak is a gathering place for artists of all ages, from young to old, to process and create together, making this community the breath of Ketoprak in Yogyakarta.



Figure 1. Sineprak performance

The term Sineprak originates from a program formed by the TPK community during the 2020 pandemic. Subsequently, this community was more often known as Sineprak as its name. TPK, formed in 2019 by Bondan Nusantara, Purwadmadi, and Purwantono, was founded on a mandate from Sultan Hamengkubuwono X to preserve ketoprak. The name Sineprak is taken from the old term "sineprak" (cinema ketoprak), referring to ketoprak performances broadcast on television, and now more famous through the YouTube platform.

The initiators of this community have diverse artistic backgrounds: Bondan Nusantara is a ketoprak artist, Purwadmadi is a writer and cultural figure, and Purwantono, an artist and cultural observer. Bondan Nusantara, with its contemporary working concept, plays an important role in directing the community. He recruited young ketoprak artists from various regions in DIY to join and preserve ketoprak, making them the first generation in this community.

Ketoprak preservation by Sineprak involves various strategies and techniques based on individual needs and conditions. The focus is on the regeneration of artists, involving

the younger generation in every event to ensure the continuity of ketoprak. The modernization of ketoprak elements is carried out so that this art remains relevant and attractive to the younger generation. Sineprak maintains, develops and disseminates ketoprak with various innovations that still respect original values.

Conservation efforts include the protection, development and dissemination of ketoprak. Protection is carried out by passing this art on to the younger generation. Development involves updating the elements of the ketoprak to be more in line with the times. Dissemination is carried out through social media, such as YouTube, so that works of art can be enjoyed by the wider community.

Community Programs and Principles as a Reflection of Community-Based Education

Bondan Nusantara spreads the spirit of work and innovation in this community. Sineprak's organizational principles prioritize transparency and kinship, with a system of "sama rasa sama rata" where there is no distinction between professional players and beginners. This community is not oriented towards money but towards a sincere sense of artistry. A rolling system of roles and positions is implemented so that all members can experience various roles in Ketoprak, although there are challenges in its implementation.

Sineprak's main program includes writing ketoprak scripts. This program aims to create a ketoprak script bank that is always new and fresh, not just relying on old scripts. Scriptwriting workshops are held for the public, guiding script creation. Through this program, several community members succeeded in winning a playwriting competition organized by the DIY Culture Service. The winning manuscripts are performed as a form of appreciation, and collected in a ketoprak printed manuscript book.

Meanwhile, the obstacles faced in writing the script included the use of high-level Javanese, which was a challenge in itself. However, community members remain committed to

learning and producing sincere work. Writing a script involves a process that is not easy, from expressing ideas to choosing the right language and dialogue, with a focus on conveying the moral message contained in the story.

With these efforts and programs, the Sineprak Community plays an important role in preserving ketoprak and making it relevant in the modern era, awakening the interest of the younger generation, and ensuring this traditional art remains alive and growing.

Actor - Director Training, and The 'Rebon' Performance

The Sineprak Community actively provides training for actors and directors to improve the quality of its members' performance. This training was carried out through several workshops on strengthening acting and directing. This workshop is open to the public, not limited to Sineprak members, while more specialized actor and director training is carried out ahead of routine community performances.

The training pattern in the Sineprak community was initiated by Bondan Nusantara together with other senior members. Based on long experience in the world of ketoprak, they created a short, concise and effective training pattern. Each performance only requires five routine rehearsals. Before starting rehearsals, the director, assistant director and new script are selected through discussions with senior members. This discussion includes character selection, storyline, setting, props, casting, fashion and make-up, accompanying music, and related media.

The training stages in the Sineprak community are carried out very systematically and structured. At the first meeting, the entire crew and actors receive the script and are given time for free interpretation. The director then provides further explanation about the script, divides the roles, and dissects the script to interpret each dialogue and scene. The goal is so that the entire crew has the same perception of each element of the story that will be staged, thereby creating harmony in the performance.



Figure 2. Manuscript Interpretation Process

At the second meeting, the actors were required to memorize at least 50% of their lines and immediately started practising with their co-stars. This exercise is important for combining dialogue and movement so that actors can be more immersed in their roles and create more natural interactions with their co-stars. By the third meeting, all actors must have fully memorized their lines. The exercises are carried out without using a script and run from start to finish. This is a test run to ensure that the actors have truly mastered their roles and are ready to perform without a hitch.

The fourth meeting focused on exercises with accompanying music. Music has an important role in synchronizing scenes and creating an atmosphere that suits the story. Rehearsing with accompanying music helps the actors to better appreciate the atmosphere of each scene. The fifth meeting or dress rehearsal is a rehearsal with a complete set, including clothing and accompanying music. All stage elements, such as sound and lighting, are prepared optimally to ensure the performance runs smoothly without any problems. This rehearsal is a simulation of a real performance, so every technical and artistic aspect must be tested properly.

The Rebon performance is a routine performance that was initially held twice a month on Wednesdays. However, in 2019,

the COVID-19 pandemic prevented live performances. As a solution, the Sineprak community moved the performance to their YouTube channel, allowing them to continue working actively and adjust the performance schedule more flexibly. Every week a video of the performance is uploaded which airs every Friday at 17.00 WIB. This change not only helps maintain Sineprak's existence during the pandemic but also opens up opportunities for them to reach a wider audience through digital platforms.

Reviving the Spirit of Javanese Culture Among the Young Generation

After Bondan Nusantara died in 2022, the Sineprak community experienced a decrease in the frequency of performances and programs carried out. Performance production is limited to five times a year with a maximum of 15 people per performance. Bondan's death also caused the community to lose important access to the DIY Cultural Service, affecting schedules and performance space. The loss of a central figure such as Bondan Nusantara had a significant impact on the motivation and enthusiasm of community members, which ultimately affected the sustainability of the programs he had initiated.

Education through the art of ketoprak at Sineprak aims to revive the spirit of Javanese culture among the younger generation. Ketoprak teaches Javanese cultural values such as politeness, wisdom and cooperation through dialogue, clothing and scenes in performances. These character education values are transferred indirectly in the process of training, performances and other community programs. Actors, audiences and supporting actors can benefit from Javanese dialogue which trains speaking and preserves the regional language. Apart from that, artistic values are also transformed through the cultural elements contained in ketoprak.



Figure 3. The performance "Rembulan Wungu" performed on the Gelar Karya Maestro stage. This performance honors the work of the late Bondan Nusantara

The transfer of character values is carried out indirectly through training processes, performances and other community programs. Actors, audiences and supporting actors can benefit from Javanese dialogue which trains speaking and preserves the regional language. Apart from that, artistic values are also transformed through the cultural elements contained in ketoprak. The process of working in this community also emphasizes cooperation and kinship. The members help each other in rehearsals and performances, creating an atmosphere that supports the transfer of noble values such as mutual assistance and cooperation.

The Sineprak community tries to package ketoprak performances following current developments, adapting to elements of modernity to attract young audiences. There is a difference between conventional ketoprak and cultivated ketoprak. Conventional Ketoprak does not use a complete script and only relies on scene points. Meanwhile, his ketoprak combines elements of other performing arts such as modern theatre, film, wayang kulit, ludruk, and dance. Aspects of music, setting, play, media and other elements are worked out optimally to create performances that are interesting and relevant to the times.

Main Characteristics of Ketoprak Sineprak

The form of presentation of ketoprak created by the Sineprak or TPK community stands out with several characteristics that differentiate it from conventional ketoprak and other modern theatres. First, they use printed manuscripts that have been recorded as the main guide in each performance. This is in line with practice in modern theater which relies on complete scripts to maintain consistency of story and dialogue. At Sineprak, they strive to always select new scripts so that each performance offers a fresh experience, avoiding the repetition of old works unless there is a special need. This is not only challenging for actors and directors in the process of reviewing new scripts but also provides an opportunity for young writers to be recognized and continue to contribute to the world of theatre arts.

Furthermore, in developing dramaturgy, Sineprak adapted Western dramatic structures to enrich the audience's experience. They follow steps such as exposition, complication, climax, anticlimax, and denouement, ensuring that every nuance in the story can be conveyed to the maximum. This approach not only increases narrative clarity in ketoprak performances but also allows the audience to become more involved in the emotional and intellectual journey offered by each play.

The techniques for producing acting, blocking, and the actor's movements are arranged neatly and carefully, which is also one of the characteristics of Sinoprak. Each scene is planned with the setting and characters involved in mind, allowing for efficiency in rehearsals despite time constraints. Collaboration between the director, assistant director, and senior members of the community ensures that every aspect of the performance is meticulously prepared, including special scenes such as fights or dances that require special skills. This precision in production is the key to presenting a consistent and immersive performance for the audience.

Then the use of realistic makeup and costumes is the main focus. This community does not have a fixed inventory for makeup and clothing but instead relies on collaboration with

other parties to provide equipment every time there is a show. This approach not only creates an atmosphere of harmonious collaboration between local artists but also ensures that each performance has an authentic visual feel and fits the context of the story being told.

Fifth, Sineprak emphasizes the use of more realistic and realistic settings and properties. They carefully consider every element of the stage, producing an engaging and immersive atmosphere for the audience. Collaboration with various parties to procure settings and props is an effective strategy in achieving high production standards in each show.

Modern technology used effectively in lighting and sound systems is a further characteristic. Lighting not only functions as a light source but also creates a dramatic effect that supports the atmosphere and emotions that each scene wants to convey. The same applies to sound settings, which are adjusted as needed to improve the overall quality of the stage performance.

Next, the accompanying music in Sineprak combines traditional gamelan elements with modern musical instruments such as drums and keyboards. This approach not only enriches the audience's auditory experience but also offers artistic freedom in creating an appropriate atmosphere for each performance. Collaboration between musical artists from various backgrounds ensures that the music produced in each ketoprak performance can keep up with the times and preferences of modern audiences.

Next, include dance elements as one of the attractions in the performance and as an interlude to support the dramatic structure as well as a beautiful attraction in the performance created by the Sineprak community.

The flexibility factor in the use of songs (gendhing) is a characteristic that differentiates Sineprak's ketoprak from conventional traditions. The use of songs is not mandatory in every performance, it depends on the creative vision of the director and the needs of the story to be told. This approach shows the community's flexibility in responding to market demands and broader audience preferences.

Things such as flexible performance duration adjusted to the needs of the script are done to ensure that each performance is efficient and effective in conveying the message of the story. The principle of simplicity but conciseness in composing a play is the main basis for meeting audience expectations.

Tenth, thorough and high-quality documentation ensures that every moment in the show is well captured. Collaboration with professional photo and videography studios helps maintain attractive visual quality and detail in every recording, expanding audience reach through social media platforms such as YouTube.

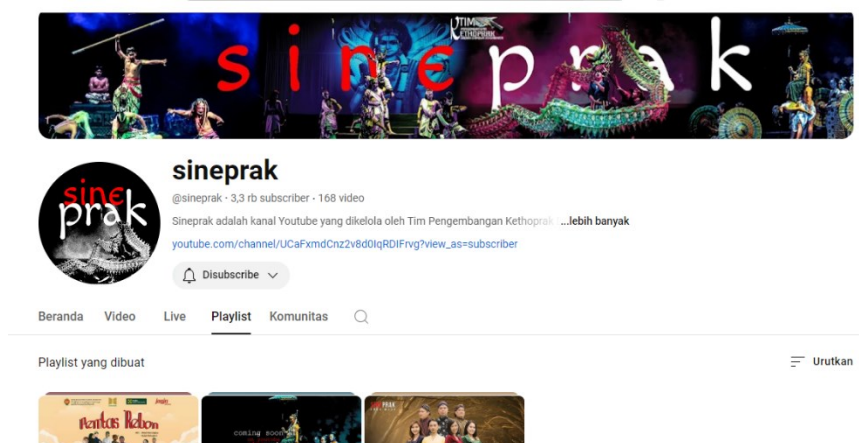


Figure 4. Sineprak Community Youtube Channel

Last but not least is that the media transfer from the Ketoprak stage area to the screening stage using broadcast recording media technology has become popular and is present as an option with all limitations (Haryono AJ, 2024). Social media is the main tool in publicizing each performance. Instagram and YouTube are actively used to attract audiences from various backgrounds and ages, overcoming space and time limitations in reaching audiences. This media also becomes a forum for the community to interact directly with the audience, expanding the influence and appreciation of modern ketoprak as promoted by Sineprak.

CONCLUSION

This research highlights the crucial role of the Sineprak community in preserving and modernizing ketoprak performing arts. Through structured actor and director training, Sineprak delivers high-quality performances that encompass not just technical skills but also deep script and character interpretation. The COVID-19 pandemic prompted Sineprak to adapt by using YouTube as their primary performance platform, showcasing their ability to innovate and reach a wider audience. Despite a significant decline in performances following Bondan Nusantara's death, Sineprak continues to instill valuable Javanese cultural values such as politeness, cooperation, and perseverance, contributing positively to the character development of the younger generation.

Sineprak has also modernized ketoprak to appeal to the millennial generation by integrating other performing arts elements and modern technology in their stage setups. Effective documentation and social media use have further increased public interest in ketoprak. For researchers, several avenues for exploration include the educational and social roles of performing arts in teaching cultural values, the impact of digital platforms on traditional arts, community responses to crises, and comparative studies with other performing arts forms. These research approaches can contribute significantly to understanding and sustaining traditional performing arts in contemporary society.

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